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INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL

International action to combat drug abuse
and illicit trafficking

Report by the Secretary-General

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* A/48/150 and Corr.1.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 47/102 of 16 December 1992 entitled "International action to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking", the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its forty-eighth session on the implementation of sections I and II of that resolution. Section I of the resolution relates to international action to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking and section II relates to the implementation of the Global Programme of Action against Illicit Production, Supply, Demand, Trafficking and Distribution of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

2. Section II of the present report concerns the request made to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to study, in cooperation with relevant agencies, the involvement of children in drug-related criminal activities and abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances by children. Section III treats the cooperation of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch with the Programme in its activities to counter drug-related criminality. Section IV refers to the request that the Programme analyse world-wide trends in the illicit traffic and transit in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Section V concerns the report of the Programme to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on experience gained to date in implementing the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (E/CONF.85/15 and Corr.2). Section VI deals with the request to the Programme to report to the Commission on the International Drug Abuse Assessment System, improvements for the collection of data on illicit traffic and money-laundering as well as on the programme of technical cooperation with developing countries in collaboration with the Financial Action Task Force.

3. With respect to the implementation of the Global Programme of Action referred to in section II of the resolution, the General Assembly has before it a detailed evaluating report by the Secretary-General (A/48/286) in response to its resolution 47/99.

4. Certain Programme activities related to other paragraphs of resolution 47/102 may also be of interest to the General Assembly. Thus, in paragraph 18 the Assembly encouraged Governments to nominate experts for the roster to be maintained by the Programme, to ensure that the Programme may draw from the widest pool of expertise and experience in implementing its policies and programmes. Such a roster was established during 1992, and efforts are continuing in 1993 to obtain details from Governments, United Nations agencies and other organizations on additional qualified experts.

5. In paragraph 19 of section I of the resolution, the Assembly stressed the need for effective action to prevent the diversion for illicit purposes of precursors and other chemicals, materials and equipment frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. In this connection, the Programme also made progress in the field of control over precursors and essential chemicals. The computerized data system for precursors and essential chemicals was expanded during 1992 to provide greater support to Member States in their efforts to prevent diversion. The third and final sessions of the working groups on the international databases and on draft guidelines for the prevention of diversion of precursors and essential chemicals

took place at Vienna in January 1993. In addition, a technical cooperation project, to be launched in 1993, has been approved. The project will involve activities in Asia aimed at developing effective control structures at the national level and subregional workshops to establish cooperation and mechanisms for identifying and interdicting suspicious transactions.

II. INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN IN DRUG-RELATED CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES

6. In paragraph 8 of section I of resolution 47/102, the General Assembly requests the Programme, in cooperation with relevant agencies, including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), to study the involvement of children in drug-related criminal activities and abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances by children, with a view to recommending measures that might be taken to address this problem.

7. The Programme has been aware of the growing problem of substance abuse among children and youth in many developing countries. Although reliable figures are not available, the number of children using drugs in developing countries is increasing. Cheap and easily available substances, such as solvents (glue and petrol in particular), and drugs such as cannabis are widely used especially by young children. Drug injecting is expanding among older children, increasing the risk of HIV/AIDS infection.

8. The Programme has funded many projects on drug demand reduction in many Member States. These projects are carried out with the involvement of government agencies, non-governmental organizations and local communities, and many are focused on the deprived communities from which street children come and on street children themselves. The Programme has favoured integrated and comprehensive projects that provide immediate assistance to the needs of the youth at risk from drug abuse and that emphasize education and training to provide street children with significant options in their lives.

9. The Programme has developed research activities in different fields such as the root causes of drug abuse among young people and the nature of the street children problem; and the analysis of trends and patterns of drug abuse among youth based on the information contained in the annual report questionnaire and on ad hoc surveys funded by the Programme within the framework of a master-plan exercise or in the preparation of projects targeting street children or youth at risk.

10. During the past three years the Programme has cooperated with the World Health Organization (WHO) in accordance with General Assembly resolution 45/179 of 21 December 1990. A project proposal has been designed on the prevention of substance abuse and other important health-risk behaviour among children and youth in the Caribbean.

11. Cooperation with UNICEF has led, at field level, to discussions on the definition of comprehensive programmes addressing health and education of youth at risk in which drug demand reduction strategies should be included. The mandates of UNICEF and the Programme have been compared in order to define a common framework of cooperation.

12. UNICEF uses the term "children in especially difficult circumstances" (CEDC) as a general category for working children, street children, abused, neglected and abandoned children, and children in areas of armed conflict and disaster zones. Certainly, this definition also includes children who are users and abusers of dangerous substances, which include not only drugs but also chemical inhalants of different sorts, such as solvents, adhesives and fuel gases and other substances subject to local abuse. The UNICEF commitment to the problem of drug abuse among CEDC is clearly stated in the Plan of Action for Implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s from the World Summit for Children (A/45/625, annex) which contains a specific reference to drug abuse in paragraph 24:

"Drug abuse has emerged as a global menace to very large numbers of young people and, increasingly, children - including permanent damage incurred in the pre-natal stages of life. Concerted action is needed by Governments and intergovernmental agencies to combat illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances to counter this tragedy. Equally important is community action and education, which are vitally needed to curb both the supply of and the demand for illicit drugs. Tobacco and alcohol abuse are also problems requiring action, especially preventive measures and education among young people".

13. Furthermore the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989, includes one article requesting "State Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative, social and educational measures, to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances" (article 33).

14. UNICEF experience with the problem of street children and CEDC in general demonstrates the need for a comprehensive and preventive approach when designing programmes and projects for CEDC. The Programme is cooperating with several UNICEF offices in the field to define preventive programmes which can be developed to tackle the root causes of poverty and deprivation among children in general and drug abuse in particular.

III. COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL PROGRAMME AND THE CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE BRANCH

15. In section I, paragraph 11, of resolution 47/102 the Assembly recommended that the Programme invite the cooperation of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch in its activities to counter drug-related criminality, including money-laundering, to ensure complementarity of their efforts and to avoid duplication.

16. Since 1992, intergovernmental bodies have increasingly stressed the need for active cooperation between the Programme and the Branch and for close coordination of their drug-related activities. Resolutions have been passed to that effect by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (resolutions 11 (XXXV) of 15 April 1992 and 10 (XXXVI) of 7 April 1993) and the Economic and Social

Council (resolution 1992/22 of 30 July 1992). Furthermore, the Assembly, in paragraph 9 of its resolution 47/91 of 16 December 1992, requested the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures for assisting the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in performing its functions as the principal policy-making body in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, and for ensuring the proper coordination of all relevant activities in the field, in particular with the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

17. A number of initiatives have been taken to implement these resolutions. One of the most important so far has been the drafting of a joint position paper by the Programme and the Branch on international cooperation in crime prevention and drug control, which will be submitted to the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, to be held in 1995. The draft of this strategic document will be reviewed by the forthcoming Subcommittee on International Drug Abuse Control of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, scheduled for September 1993, and will be considered by both the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute is also contributing to its preparation.

18. Most of the concrete and practical collaboration between the Programme and the Branch in the past year has been in the legal field. A joint fact-finding mission to Albania laid the foundation for more systematic collaborative missions. These are particularly appropriate where the requesting State needs assistance in upgrading its domestic laws, judicial systems and arrangements in line with international drug control conventions as well as assistance in dealing with other areas of serious crime and with crime prevention, or in improving the fairness, efficiency, management or administration of its criminal justice and related systems.

19. Other collaborative activities have focused on improving the effectiveness of implementation of international legal and judicial cooperation in drug-related and other serious crime (e.g. mutual legal assistance and extradition). Some examples are as follows:

(a) The Programme held an expert working group meeting on mutual legal assistance and related confiscation in Vienna in February 1993 with support and expert participation provided by the Branch. The group examined implementation experience to date, identified legal and operational problems impeding effective implementation and developed strategies and recommendations to overcome them;

(b) The Branch participated in the Interregional Investigation Techniques Course on Money-laundering, organized by the Programme, held in Malta from 7 to 9 March 1993;

(c) The Programme will participate in an ad hoc expert working group meeting organized by the Branch and scheduled to be held from 18 to 21 October 1993 on the development of model legislation to foster reliance on model treaties.

20. At a more everyday level, the legal assistance unit of the Programme and its counterpart in the Branch are collaborating in the development of model legislation to provide the legislative foundation for concluding bilateral or regional model treaties for international cooperation, such as those on extradition and mutual assistance in criminal matters adopted by the General Assembly in its resolutions 45/116 and 45/117 of 14 December 1990, while at the same time monitoring international cooperation obligations of States parties to the international drug control conventions.

21. Since the social-science-based research and policy analysis capability of the Programme are still being developed, there has been less opportunity for immediate collaboration in this area. Proposals for joint activities on the impact of the new requirements of drug abuse control on criminal justice systems have been developed and are under review. Practical collaborative work should begin before the end of 1993.

IV. WORLD-WIDE TRENDS IN ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFIC AND TRANSIT

22. In section I, paragraph 14, of resolution 47/102, the Assembly requested the Programme to analyse world-wide trends in illicit traffic and transit in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, including methods and routes used, and to recommend ways and means for improving the capacity of States along those routes to deal with all aspects of the drug problem.

23. In 1992 and 1993 the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, in accordance with its practice in previous years, considered trends in illicit drug traffic through the reports of its subsidiary bodies, namely the Meetings of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEAs) in each region, including Europe in 1993, together with the Subcommittee on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East. These reports supplement the analysis of the world situation, by region, that is included in the annual report of the International Narcotics Control Board.

24. The report of each subsidiary body contains a chapter on the current situation and trends in illicit drug traffic in the region. The full reports of subsidiary body meetings are available to the Commission in the form of conference room papers, while a separate document contains these specific chapters along with matters arising which may require action by the Commission.

25. The subsidiary bodies, meeting in working groups, examine urgent topics and specific matters concerning the work of heads of national drug law enforcement agencies, primarily within their respective regions but also of an interregional nature. Many of these concern emerging trends in illicit traffic, methods of concealment and variations in routes used, along with the introduction of improved methods of cooperation between the enforcement agencies of different States or the introduction and effective use of new investigation techniques, especially those highlighted in the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, the use of which is encouraged in the Global Programme of Action.

26. Additionally, the working groups of subsidiary bodies make recommendations which, in the last two years, have been primarily addressed to States of the

regions to encourage them to deal with problem areas and cultivate more effective enforcement methods and cooperation between drug enforcement agencies and States. Recommendations that are endorsed by the plenary meeting and later noted by the Commission are re-examined at the next meeting of the subsidiary body from the viewpoint of progress in implementation. Working groups meeting in 1992 made recommendations on illicit traffic by sea, including the use of cargo containers; the investigation, confiscation and forfeiture of the proceeds of illicit drug traffic; improved cooperation between police and customs; precursors; and combating the use by traffickers of new routes and methods of concealment, such as the use of rapid courier services.

V. EXPERIENCE GAINED IN RELATION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST ILLICIT TRAFFIC
IN NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES OF 1988

27. In section I, paragraph 10, of resolution 47/102, the Assembly requested the Programme to include in its report to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs a section on experience gained in implementing the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 including recommendations and strategies for its further implementation. The report to the thirty-sixth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (E/CN.7/1993/3) detailed the range of services available to States in the field of legal assistance in connection with the implementation of the 1988 Convention. In this context, reference was made to the programme of legal workshops organized by the Programme and to the preparation of model legislation for different legal systems. In addition, the Commission considered the report of the Expert Working Group on Mutual Legal Assistance and related International Confiscation (E/CN.7/1993/CRP.13) which was convened by the Programme to make recommendations to States on ways to improve mutual legal assistance between States in order to further implement article 7 of the 1988 Convention.

VI. DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL DRUG ABUSE ASSESSMENT
SYSTEM, COLLECTION OF DATA ON ILLICIT TRAFFIC AND
TECHNICAL COOPERATION WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

28. In section I, paragraph 22, of resolution 47/102, the Assembly requested the Programme to report to the Commission on progress made in obtaining reliable data on drug abuse and illicit trafficking, including the development of the International Drug Abuse Assessment System (IDAAS) on the project to determine possible improvements to the international system for the collection of data on illicit traffic and money-laundering and on the programme of technical cooperation with developing countries in collaboration with the Financial Action Task Force.

29. The report of the Executive Director to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its thirty-sixth session (E/CN.7/1993/3) contained a summary of the development of IDAAS and mention was made of the difficulties encountered, in part because of definitional inconsistencies and insufficient data from countries. It was reported that a long-term programme is being prepared in order to increase both the quality and quantity of information entering the IDAAS data bank. An encouraging development was reported in the launching of the Rapid Abuse

Assessment System, designed to provide developing countries with a reasonably inexpensive tool to determine the nature and extent of their drug abuse problems.

30. The Executive Director also reported to the Commission on a low cost initiative permitting the Programme, the Customs Cooperation Council and the International Criminal Police Organization to develop an on-line computer link to provide access to their data on illicit trafficking. This system began functioning at the end of 1992.

31. The Executive Director reported that in 1992 the Programme and the Financial Action Task Force agreed through an exchange of letters to carry out technical work in the field of money-laundering and seizure of assets, with particular emphasis on law enforcement. The programme of assistance will include legislative assistance, training and advisory services. The Programme also financed an executive awareness course for law enforcement officials from Egypt, India, Kenya, Malta, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Zambia and Zimbabwe, held at Vancouver, Canada, in October 1992, and an intensive operations-oriented course for law enforcement officers from the same States and Nigeria, held in Malta in March 1993.
